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Mr. Beer does justice to that neglected colonial governor, Shirley of Massachusetts, whose influence on the history of the empire he rightly believes has been most inadequately recognized (140). He states what every reader of Shirley's elaborate correspondence knows, that Shirley was one of the few far-sighted governors in America and in no sense deserving to be classed with incompetent and office-seeking politicians.

The chief weakness of Mr. Beer's essay is its neglect of the colonial side of the case. Such neglect is a weakness inherent in any exclusive use of the British state papers. The future historian will need to treat both aspects together, balancing and proportioning the evidence and building up a symmetrical structure. Hitherto, but one side of the case has been presented, the other, alternately condemned and condoned, has been either misrepresented or altogether omitted. It is but just that the balance should be restored and that the British records should be allowed at last to tell their own story.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

English Local Government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act. Vols. ii, iii. *The Manor and the Borough.* By SIDNEY and BEATRICE WEBB. (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1908. Pp. viii, vi + 858.)

These two volumes constitute the second installment of the great work on English local government which was outlined by Mr. and Mrs. Webb when they published the first volume at the end of 1906.¹ The first volume covered the parish and the county, and described local government in these areas, during the years from 1689 to 1835, by vestry meetings and county benches of magistrates. In the present volumes, Mr. and Mrs. Webb carry on the story to the manor and the borough. The manor, in 1689, was already decadent as a unit of local government; but the lord of the manor still held the court baron and the court leet; and an understanding of the organization of the manor is, as Mr. and Mrs. Webb show, absolutely necessary for a proper comprehension of the organization and government of the English boroughs, which in most cases had passed through the stage of manorial boroughs before attaining their independence of the lord of the manor, through the acquisition of their charters of incorporation.

¹ This volume was reviewed in *Political Science Review* of February, 1907.

To the student of political science probably the greatest value of Mr. and Mrs. Webb's book will lie in the light it throws on the complete change of political ideals that took place during the transition period which is covered by "English local government." This change is brought out in Mr. and Mrs. Webb's description of the municipal corporations reform act of 1835. In a previous section—when treating of the decay of the lords' courts—emphasis is laid on the contrast between the old ideal of social life in which the root principle was that "however men might differ in faculties or desires, they were under an equal obligation to serve the community by undertaking in turn all the offices required for its healthy life." The eighteenth century ideal which took the place of this root principle, was the "universal equality of civil and political rights." A similar change of political principles and ideals inspired the royal commission which sat from 1833 to 1835 to enquire into the conditions of the boroughs; and the same change may be seen in the municipal corporations act of 1835 which reformed 178 of the boroughs of England and Wales.

Viewed in the light of modern conceptions of property, this act, beneficent as it has been in its results, appears to Mr. and Mrs. Webb almost as revolutionary as would be an act to nationalize the railways of England without compensation to the shareholders. Mr. and Mrs. Webb point out that a borough in its origin merely took the place of the lord of the manor, and acquired from the lord, frequently at heavy money cost, the privileges and jurisdictions which had been the property of the lord. "The municipal corporation," they write, "stood in this respect (in regard to its property) in no different position from the manorial borough and the lord and homage of a manor. All alike held their estates and jurisdictions subject to the liability to have them resumed, varied and regranted, as the changing circumstances might require * * *. Such a conception of private property did not, however, outlive the commonwealth. In the eighteenth century there came to be recognized the absolute right of every legal owner of property to retain it against all comers." And yet in 1835 parliament undertook to take forcibly from its owners the property of 178 corporations leaving untouched some twenty or twenty-five other corporations which in nowise differed from them, and also all the manorial boroughs and the lords of the manor, who held their titles on an exactly similar basis, and to vest this property in "new bodies for the advantage of entirely different sets of beneficiaries, namely not the members of the corporate bodies or the freemen, but the inhabitants at large." Such a course of

action acquiesced in by the nation at large, though opposed by the house of lords, as representing landed property, can only be explained by reference to the new political ideas which had grown up previous to the French revolution and which reached their fruition in the reform act of 1832, and the reforms of local government—the poor law in 1834 and the municipal corporations in 1835 which were the work of the first reformed parliament. It is as illustrating this great change in political ideals and theories that Mr. and Mrs. Webb's book makes the greatest contribution to political science.

A. G. PORRITT.

Stephen A. Douglas: A Study in American Politics. By ALLEN JOHNSON, Professor of History in Bowdoin College (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1908. Pp. 503.)

It is remarkable that Stephen A. Douglas should wait fifty years for an adequately appreciative biographer. Statesmen series have been published for the period preceding the civil war, but the one statesman whose personal contribution to the politics of the time equaled, if it did not excel, that of any other has been omitted from the list. Every detail in the life of Lincoln has been sought out and published. His life has been written and rewritten scores of times. By a crude, sentimental reading of history, such as has characterized special crises in ages of conflict, Lincoln has been made to embody and express all that is glorious in the saving of the Union and the emancipation of the slave. Luther personates the Reformation, Cromwell the Puritan revolution, Washington the founding of our republic, and Lincoln the second great national deliverance; and by the same unreasoning process Douglas, Lincoln's chief political rival, has incurred peculiar reprobation as representing the forces of opposition and hindrance to the policy of the nation's hero. It is, indeed, not to the sentimentalists alone that Douglas has been obnoxious. On account of his natural temperament and because of his transcendent ability as a special pleader, he has likewise fallen into disfavor with those endued with the modern scientific spirit.

Mr. Johnson's book, however, is not written to do justice to a man with whom fate has dealt unfairly. The work is based rather upon the conviction that the events in the life of Douglas are essential to the correct reading of the history of the period. With infinite pains and labor all available sources of information about the man Douglas are utilized to illuminate the history. To the extent of the author's ability